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ADA American Dental Association

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The Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research

# The 1987 Survey of Dental Practice

## Employment Status of Dentists

February, 1988

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EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS
FOR THE YEAR 1986


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## HIGHLIGHTS

* Among all dentists who worked in private practice as a primary occupation, 92.9% were owners or part-owners in their current primary practices.

* For all dentists, sole proprietorship is the predominant form of dental practice ownership (58.4%). This holds true for general practitioners, of whom 62.0% are currently sole proprietors. In the case of specialists however, there is a greater tendency to be a shareholder in an incorporated practice (49.8%) rather than a sole proprietor (37.8%).

* Among all dentists who began in their current primary practice as nonowners in an incorporated or unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis, 68.0% are currently owners or part-owners of their dental practices.

## INTRODUCTION

This report provides descriptive statistics from the 1987 Survey of Dental Practice on the employment status of private practitioners in the United States for the year 1986. Some of the areas summarized are: initial ownership status of current primary practice, current ownership status in primary practice, and the changes in these two.

Tables are presented separately for all dentists (private practitioners), independent (owner) dentists, solo dentists, nonowner dentists, and dentists graduating since 1980. Each section is preceded by a brief summary citing statistics on all responding dentists in a given category. The tables present detailed data broken down by general practitioner and specialty status for each of the five categories.

ALL DENTISTS

Most dentists started in their current primary practices as owners (82.7%) acting as sole proprietor, partner, or shareholder in an incorporated practice. Sole proprietorship was the most common form of dental practice ownership, representing 70.7% of all dentists, 72.1% of all general practitioners, and 62.9% of all specialists.

About 92.9% of all dentists share in the ownership of their current primary practice or are the sole owners of their practices.

Currently among all dentists, sole proprietorship is still the predominant form of dental practice ownership, represented by 58.4% of this sample. Most general practitioners are sole proprietors (62.0%), while most specialists (49.8%) are shareholders in an incorporated practice. Less than forty percent of all specialists are currently sole proprietors.

Among all dentists who began in their current primary practices as nonowners, 68.0% became owners or part-owners; 32.2% became sole proprietors, 24.1% became shareholders in an incorporated practice, and the remaining 11.7% became partners.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — ALL DENTISTS

DENTISTS WHO STARTED IN THEIR CURRENT PRACTICE AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 1448 | 72.1 | 222 | 62.9 | 1670 | 70.7 |
| PARTNER | 113 | 5.6 | 30 | 8.4 | 143 | 6.0 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 103 | 5.1 | 39 | 11.0 | 142 | 6.0 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 116 | 5.8 | 36 | 10.3 | 153 | 6.5 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 133 | 6.6 | 19 | 5.5 | 153 | 6.5 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 96 | 4.8 | 6 | 1.7 | 102 | 4.3 |
| ALL | 2009 | 100.0 | 352 | 100.0 | 2362 | 100.0 |

DENTISTS CURRENTLY PRACTICING AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 1245 | 62.0 | 133 | 37.8 | 1378 | 58.4 |
| PARTNER | 115 | 5.7 | 29 | 8.3 | 144 | 6.1 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 494 | 24.6 | 176 | 49.8 | 670 | 28.4 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 69 | 3.4 | 9 | 2.4 | 77 | 3.3 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 34 | 1.7 | 1 | 0.2 | 34 | 1.5 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 52 | 2.6 | 5 | 1.6 | 57 | 2.4 |
| ALL | 2009 | 100.0 | 352 | 100.0 | 2362 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — ALL DENTISTS

DENTISTS BEGINNING AS PRACTICE NONOWNERS AND CURRENTLY ARE

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 89 | 35.7 | 9 | 16.3 | 98 | 32.2 |
| PARTNER | 26 | 10.4 | 10 | 17.4 | 36 | 11.7 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 45 | 18.1 | 29 | 51.1 | 74 | 24.1 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 55 | 22.2 | 7 | 13.0 | 63 | 20.5 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 30 | 12.2 | 1 | 1.1 | 31 | 10.2 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 3 | 1.4 | 1 | 1.1 | 4 | 1.3 |
| ALL | 249 | 100.0 | 56 | 100.0 | 305 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

## INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

Of all independent dentists, 88.2% started in their current primary practices as owners, acting as sole proprietor, partner, or shareholder in an incorporated practice. Sole proprietorship was the most common form of dental practice ownership; 75.4% of all independent dentists, 77.3% of all independent general practitioners, 65.1% of all independent specialists were sole proprietors.

Currently among all independent dentists, sole proprietorship is still the predominant form of dental practice ownership (62.9%). Independent general practitioners tend to be sole proprietors (67.1%), while the majority of independent specialists are shareholders in an incorporated practice (52.0%). Approximately 39.4% of all independent specialists are currently sole proprietors.

This pattern holds true among independent dentists who began in their current primary practices as nonowners. Independent specialists tend to become shareholders in an incorporated practice (60.3%). Independent general practitioners tend to choose sole proprietorships (55.6%).

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

DENTISTS WHO STARTED IN THEIR CURRENT PRACTICE AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 1434 | 77.3 | 220 | 65.1 | 1653 | 75.4 |
| PARTNER | 111 | 6.0 | 30 | 8.8 | 140 | 6.4 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 102 | 5.5 | 39 | 11.5 | 140 | 6.4 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 60 | 3.2 | 29 | 8.5 | 88 | 4.0 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 100 | 5.4 | 19 | 5.6 | 119 | 5.4 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 49 | 2.6 | 2 | 0.5 | 50 | 2.3 |
| ALL | 1855 | 100.0 | 338 | 100.0 | 2192 | 100.0 |

DENTISTS CURRENTLY PRACTICING AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 1245 | 67.1 | 133 | 39.4 | 1378 | 62.9 |
| PARTNER | 115 | 6.2 | 29 | 8.6 | 144 | 6.6 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 494 | 26.7 | 176 | 52.0 | 670 | 30.6 |
| ALL | 1855 | 100.0 | 338 | 100.0 | 2192 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

DENTISTS BEGINNING AS PRACTICE NONOWNERS AND CURRENTLY ARE

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 89 | 55.6 | 9 | 19.2 | 98 | 47.3 |
| PARTNER | 26 | 16.2 | 10 | 20.5 | 36 | 17.2 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 45 | 28.2 | 29 | 60.3 | 74 | 35.5 |
| ALL | 160 | 100.0 | 47 | 100.0 | 208 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

## SOLO DENTISTS

Of all solo dentists, 92.1% started in their current primary practices as owners, acting as sole proprietor, partner, or shareholder in an incorporated practice. Sole proprietorship was the most common form of dental practice ownership, 84.2% for all solo dentists, 85.2% for all solo general practitioners, 77.8% for all solo specialists.

Currently among all solo dentists, sole proprietorship is still the predominant form of dental practice ownership (73.8%). Both solo general practitioners and solo specialists tend to be sole proprietors, 77.6% and 51.3%, respectively. However, a large proportion of the solo specialists are shareholders in an incorporated practice (48.7%).

Among all solo dentists who began in their current primary practices as nonowners, there is a tendency for solo specialists to become shareholders in an incorporated practice (55.6%). Independent general practitioners tend to favor sole proprietorships (82.7%).

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — SOLO DENTISTS

DENTISTS WHO STARTED IN THEIR CURRENT PRACTICE AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 1218 | 85.2 | 183 | 77.8 | 1401 | 84.2 |
| PARTNER | 37 | 2.6 | 10 | 4.4 | 48 | 2.9 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 58 | 4.0 | 25 | 10.6 | 82 | 5.0 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 28 | 2.0 | 8 | 3.4 | 36 | 2.2 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 63 | 4.4 | 9 | 3.6 | 72 | 4.3 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 25 | 1.7 | 1 | 0.3 | 25 | 1.5 |
| ALL | 1429 | 100.0 | 236 | 100.0 | 1665 | 100.0 |

DENTISTS CURRENTLY PRACTICING AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 1108 | 77.6 | 121 | 51.3 | 1229 | 73.8 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 321 | 22.4 | 115 | 48.7 | 435 | 26.2 |
| ALL | 1429 | 100.0 | 236 | 100.0 | 1665 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — SOLO DENTISTS

DENTISTS BEGINNING AS PRACTICE NONOWNERS AND CURRENTLY ARE

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 76 | 82.7 | 7 | 44.4 | 83 | 76.9 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 16 | 17.3 | 9 | 55.6 | 25 | 23.1 |
| ALL | 91 | 100.0 | 16 | 100.0 | 108 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

## NONOWNER DENTISTS

Of all current nonowner dentists, approximately 14.2% started in their current primary practices as owners, acting as sole proprietor, partner, or shareholder in an incorporated practice. Most (83.8%) nonowner dentists began in their current primary practice employed by an incorporated (56.0%) or unincorporated (27.8%) dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage or associate basis.

Currently among all nonowner dentists, employment by an incorporated practice is still the predominant form of dental practice employment (69.2%).

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — EMPLOYED DENTISTS

DENTISTS WHO STARTED IN THEIR CURRENT PRACTICE AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 12 | 12.1 | 1 | 13.3 | 14 | 12.2 |
| PARTNER | 1 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.0 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 1 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.0 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 55 | 53.8 | 7 | 80.0 | 63 | 56.0 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 30 | 29.7 | 1 | 6.7 | 31 | 27.8 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 2 | 2.2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2.0 |
| ALL | 103 | 100.0 | 9 | 100.0 | 112 | 100.0 |

DENTISTS CURRENTLY PRACTICING AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 69 | 67.0 | 9 | 93.3 | 77 | 69.2 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 34 | 33.0 | 1 | 6.7 | 34 | 30.8 |
| ALL | 103 | 100.0 | 9 | 100.0 | 112 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — EMPLOYED DENTISTS

DENTISTS BEGINNING AS PRACTICE NONOWNERS AND CURRENTLY ARE

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | | |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 55 | 64.5 | 7 | 92.3 | 63 | 66.8 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 30 | 35.5 | 1 | 7.7 | 31 | 33.2 |
| ALL | 86 | 100.0 | 8 | 100.0 | 94 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

## DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

Most dentists graduating since 1980 began in their current primary practices as owners (51.2%). Sole proprietorship was the most common form of dental practice ownership for both general practitioners (38.6%) and specialists (40.0%).

Currently, among all dentists graduating after 1980, the percentage of dentists practicing as sole proprietors, (49.1%) is higher than the percentage of dentists who started in their current practices as sole proprietors (38.6%). In comparison, among all dentists, the percentage of sole proprietors is currently 12.3 percentage points lower than the percentage of dentists who started as sole proprietors. Among all dentists graduating since 1980, sole proprietorship shows the most rapid growth at 10.5 percentage points. The second most rapidly growing type of ownership is that of shareholders in an incorporated practice, rising 5.1 points from 5.2% of initial ownership to 10.3% of current ownership.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

DENTISTS WHO STARTED IN THEIR CURRENT PRACTICE AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 116 | 38.6 | 5 | 40.0 | 121 | 38.6 |
| PARTNER | 20 | 6.7 | 3 | 25.0 | 23 | 7.4 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 16 | 5.2 | 1 | 5.0 | 16 | 5.2 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 61 | 20.2 | 1 | 10.0 | 62 | 19.8 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 38 | 12.7 | 1 | 5.0 | 39 | 12.4 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 50 | 16.5 | 2 | 15.0 | 51 | 16.4 |
| ALL | 301 | 100.0 | 12 | 100.0 | 314 | 100.0 |

DENTISTS CURRENTLY PRACTICING AS

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 149 | 49.4 | 5 | 40.0 | 154 | 49.1 |
| PARTNER | 24 | 7.9 | 3 | 25.0 | 27 | 8.5 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 30 | 10.1 | 2 | 15.0 | 32 | 10.3 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 46 | 15.4 | 1 | 10.0 | 47 | 15.1 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 18 | 6.0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 5.8 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 34 | 11.2 | 1 | 10.0 | 35 | 11.2 |
| ALL | 301 | 100.0 | 12 | 100.0 | 314 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DENTISTS — DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

DENTISTS BEGINNING AS PRACTICE NONOWNERS AND CURRENTLY ARE

| | TYPE OF DENTIST | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GENERAL PRACTITIONER | | SPECIALIST | | ALL | |
| | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | | WEIGHTED | |
| TYPE OF DENTIST | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| SOLE PROPRIETOR | 26 | 26.1 | 0 | 0 | 26 | 25.7 |
| PARTNER | 7 | 6.8 | 1 | 33.3 | 7 | 7.3 |
| SHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 6 | 5.7 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 5.6 |
| NONSHAREHOLDER - INCORPORATED | 42 | 42.0 | 1 | 66.7 | 43 | 42.5 |
| EMPLOYED, ASSOCIATE - UNINCORPORATED | 18 | 18.2 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 17.9 |
| INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | 1 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.1 |
| ALL | 99 | 100.0 | 2 | 100.0 | 101 | 100.0 |

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 1987 Survey of Dental Practice (SDP) was a condensed version of the long-form 1985 SDP. This short-form of the survey was sent to 4% of the dentists who were known to be actively engaged in the private practice of dentistry.

### Sampling

The population consisted of 134,678 dentists who, based on the 1982 Distribution of Dentists, were known to be in private practice, even if only part-time.

The Distribution of Dentists is a dental census that is conducted periodically by the American Dental Association. Although the 1982 distribution is the most recent complete census, the sampling frame is updated by adding information about recent graduations, retirements, and deaths when available. Dentists with an unknown practice type were included in the sampling frame.

The sample was ordered by type of practice - general practitioner or specialist. Within each type, the sample was sorted by dental school and graduation year. A random sample from each type of practice was selected. Since specialists comprise a small percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to ensure adequate numbers for statistical analysis (i.e., the proportion of specialists sampled is higher than the actual percentage of specialists in the total population). It should be noted that the sample was drawn in such a way as to make statements about general practitioners and specialists as a whole. For any given specialty, we may not have enough dentists responding to make reliable statements about that individual specialty.

### Data Collection

The 1987 SDP was initially mailed in April 1987. Two follow-up mailings to non-respondents occurred in May and June 1987. A telephone follow-up to nonrespondents was conducted in July and August 1987. Coding, hand-editing, and computer processing were completed in September 1987. The final response rate was computed after the individuals who were either retired, disabled, deceased, not in private practice, or had unknown addresses were eliminated from the sample. The adjusted sample size was used to calculate the final response rate of 57.5%.

## Weighting the Sample

Since the proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual percentage in the dental population, it is necessary to account for this imbalance when making statements about the total dental population. The correction is accomplished by developing and applying a weighting factor to each sampled dentist.

Weights were calculated for general practitioners and specialists separately, by dividing the percentage of each in the population by the percentage in the sample. The assumed proportion of general practitioners in the population is 85%, specialists, 15%. The percentage of general practitioners in the sample is 75.3%, specialists, 24.7%.

The weights were computed as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| General Practitioner | .85/.753 = 1.128818 |
| Specialists | .15/.247 = 0.607287 |

These weights were employed in the calculations of means and medians for cases in which general practitioners and specialists were combined (i.e., when statements were made about "all" solo or independent dentists). The weights were also used when percentages of dentists in various categories were computed. The totals as well as the percentages are weighted, making the totals smaller or larger than those for the actual sample.

## DEFINITIONS

Definitions of several terms and phrases are provided in this section to assist with the interpretation of data contained in the tables in this and other reports. In general, the dentists included in this report were working in private practice as a primary occupation. In addition, all dentists had started in their current (i.e., 1987) practice prior to 1986.

**All Dentists:** This group of dentists contains all dentists responding to the survey, including those who are employed by a dentist or dental practice.

**Dental Practice Personnel (All Staff):** This group includes dental hygienists, chairside assistants, dental laboratory technicians, secretary/receptionists, bookkeepers and other office personnel. Dentists employed by the practice are NOT included.

**Full-Time and Part-Time:** For purposes of this report, full-time was defined as working in the practice at least 32 hours per week. Part-time was defined as working in the practice less than 32 hours per week.

**Hourly Salary:** The hourly salary reported is computed by dividing the weekly salary by the number of hours worked.

**Independent Dentists:** All dentists who own or share in the ownership of a dental practice are independent dentists. This ownership status includes sole proprietorship, partnership and shareholders in an incorporated practice.

**Mean:** This is the simple average of values reported by the dentists responding to the survey. The mean is calculated by summing the values reported and then dividing the sum by the number of dentists reporting values.

**Mean Per Year:** This represents the average value reported for a year's period of time (e.g., mean number of appointments per year). The per year figures were determined by multiplying the per week values by the number of weeks worked that year.

**Nonowner Dentists (Employed):** This group includes all dentists who work in a dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage or associate basis.

**Nonsolo Dentists:** Nonsolo dentists work in a dental practice with at least one other dentist. Some of these dentists may be employed by the owner dentists in the practice.

**Patient No-Shows:** The total of patient no-shows is defined as the difference between the number of appointments scheduled and the number of scheduled visits treated. It was assumed that the number of scheduled visits treated is equal to or less than the number of appointments scheduled.

**Regions:** The following is a breakdown of the states in each region.

New England: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Middle Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
East North Central: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
West North Central: IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD
South Atlantic: DE, MD, DC, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA, WV
East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
West South Central: AR, LA, OK, TX
Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY
Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

**Scheduled Visits Treated:** Scheduled appointments that were kept by the patients.

**Solo Dentists:** All dentists who work in private practice with no other dentists are solos. A solo dentist is also a sole proprietor or the only shareholder in an incorporated practice.

**Total Patient Visits:** Total patients visits is the sum of walk-in visits, emergency visits, and scheduled visits treated.

**Weighting:** Since specialists comprise a smaller percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to insure adequate numbers for statistical analysis. The proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual proportion of specialists in the total population of dentists. Please note that individual specialties were not oversampled, and, therefore, only statistics on specialists as a group are presented. Statistics computed for All Dentists were weighted to reflect national proportions.

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# 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

Please answer all questions by **circling** the number corresponding to the most appropriate response, except where a fill in the blank is requested.

1. Which of the following **best** describes your primary and/or secondary occupation(s) during 1986? Please circle **one** response for **EACH** column.)

| | Primary Occupation | Secondary Occupation |
|---|---|---|
| a. Private practice (full- or part-time) | 00 | 00 |
| b. Dental school faculty/staff member | 01 | 01 |
| c. Armed Forces | 02 | 02 |
| d. Other federal services (e.g., VA, PHS) | 03 | 03 |
| e. State or local government employed | 04 | 04 |
| f. Hospital staff dentist | 05 | 05 |
| g. Intern/resident | 06 | 06 |
| h. Other student | 07 | 07 |
| i. Other health/dental organization staff member (e.g., NIDR) | 08 | 08 |
| j. Not in practice/retired | 09 | 09 |
| k. Occupation unrelated to dentistry | 10 | 10 |
| l. **NO SECONDARY OCCUPATION** | — | 11 |

Please complete the remainder of this questionnaire if you were in **PRIVATE PRACTICE** during **ANY PART** of 1986 as:

1. a **PRIMARY** occupation, **OR**
2. a **SECONDARY** occupation, **OR**
3. both a **PRIMARY** and **SECONDARY** occupation.

If you were **NOT INVOLVED** in the **PRIVATE PRACTICE** of dentistry during any part of 1986 please **RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.** Thank you.

## INDIVIDUAL DENTIST QUESTIONS

The following questions pertain to you as an individual private practitioner. If you changed practices (i.e., worked in more than one **PRIMARY** practice during 1986), please give information on the practice in which you treated patients for the greatest number of months.

2. Are you currently **ANNOUNCING** yourself and practicing as a specialist in an ADA recognized specialty area (dental public health, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, or prosthodontics)?

Yes ..... 1
No ..... 2

| | Primary Practice | Secondary Practice |
|---|---|---|
| 3. In what year did you **FIRST** become associated with the primary/secondary practice where you practiced during 1986? | 19 ____ | 19 ____ |

4. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status when you **FIRST** became associated with that practice?

| | Primary Practice | Secondary Practice |
|---|---|---|
| a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice | 1 | 1 |
| b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership | 2 | 2 |
| c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice | 3 | 3 |
| d. Employed by an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder | 4 | 4 |
| e. Employed by an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis | 5 | 5 |
| f. Independent contractor | 6 | 6 |
| g. Other, please specify ____ | | |

5. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status in the practice(s) during 1986?

| | Primary Practice | Secondary Practice |
|---|---|---|
| a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice | 1 | 1 |
| b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership | 2 | 2 |
| c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice | 3 | 3 |
| d. Employed in an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder | 4 | 4 |
| e. Employed in an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis | 5 | 5 |
| f. Independent contractor | 6 | 6 |
| g. Other, please specify ____ | | |

| | Primary Practice | Secondary Practice |
|---|---|---|
| 6. What was the zip code of your practice(s) during 1986? | ____ | ____ |
| | zip code | |

7. Please indicate the following regarding patient care that **YOU PERSONALLY** provided during 1986?

| | Primary Practice | Secondary Practice |
|---|---|---|
| The average number of: | | |
| a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only) | _____ | _____ |
| | **appointments per week** | |
| b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.) | _____ | _____ |
| | **visits per week** | |
| c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.) | _____ | _____ |
| | **visits per week** | |
| d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that **YOU ACTUALLY** treated (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only | _____ | _____ |
| | **visits per week** | |

8. Please answer the following about the time **YOU PERSONALLY** spent in the practice(s) during 1986.

| | Primary Practice | Secondary Practice |
|---|---|---|
| a. Total number of weeks worked (excluding vacation) | _____ | _____ |
| | **weeks** | |
| b. Total number of **HOURS PER WEEK** spent in the practice | _____ | _____ |
| | **hours per week** | |
| c. Number of hours per week spent **TREATING PATIENTS** in the practice | _____ | _____ |
| | **hours per week** | |

9. What was **YOUR** 1986 net income (after practice expenses and business taxes) from: (Please include salary, commission and/or dividends.)

| | Net Income |
|---|---|
| a. Your primary practice | $ _____ .00 |
| b. Your secondary practice (if applicable) | $ _____ .00 |
| c. Other income from dentistry (i.e., teaching, research, other practice, etc.) | $ _____ .00 |

If you were in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1986, please continue.

If you were **NOT** in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1986, **DO NOT CONTINUE.** Please return the questionnaire. Thank you.

# ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

10. **INCLUDING YOURSELF**, please indicate the number of full- or part-time **DENTIST POSITIONS** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. (If none, enter zero.)

| | Number of Dentist Positions |
|---|---|
| a. Number of **OWNER** dentists (i.e., sole proprietor, partners, or shareholders) | _____ |
| b. Number of **NON-OWNER** dentists (i.e., employed dentists, associates and non-shareholders) If none, enter zero | _____ |

11. Please indicate the number of full-time (32 hours per week or more) and part-time (less than 32 hours per week) **EMPLOYEE POSITIONS** in the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. (If none, enter zero.)

| | Number of Employee Positions | |
|---|---|---|
| | full-time | part-time |
| a. Dental hygienist(s) | _____ | _____ |
| b. Chairside assistant(s) | _____ | _____ |
| c. Secretary/receptionist(s)* | _____ | _____ |
| d. Dental laboratory technician(s) | _____ | _____ |
| e. Bookkeeper, business personnel | _____ | _____ |
| f. Other, please specify _____ | _____ | _____ |

***NOTE:** A secretary or receptionist who also provides chairside assistance at least 50% of the time should be counted as a chairside assistant.

12. Please provide the following for **EACH DENTAL HYGIENIST** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986: If the practice did not employ someone in these positions, please check the appropriate box in the first column.

| **DENTAL HYGIENIST(S):** | Not applicable (Please check boxes) | 1986 ANNUAL Salary/ Commission (in dollars) | Weeks Worked in 1986 | Hours Worked per Week | Length of Experience PRIOR to Employment in this Practice | | Length of Employment in this Practice | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Position #1 | ☐ | $ _____ per year | _____ weeks | _____ hours | _____ years | _____ months | _____ years | _____ months |
| Position #2 | ☐ | $ _____ per year | _____ weeks | _____ hours | _____ years | _____ months | _____ years | _____ months |
| Position #3 | ☐ | $ _____ per year | _____ weeks | _____ hours | _____ years | _____ months | _____ years | _____ months |

13. Please provide the following regarding all dental hygienist(s) appointments and visits in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986:

| The average number of: | Dental Hygienist(s) |
|---|---|
| a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week primarily for hygienist(s) treatment | _____ appointments per week |
| b **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were actually treated by all hygienist(s) | _____ visits per week |

14. Please indicate the following regarding patient care by the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986:

| The average number of: | Entire Practice |
|---|---|
| a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week **(EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only) | _____ appointments per week |
| b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that were treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero | _____ visits per week |
| c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week (i.e., no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero | _____ visits per week |
| d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were **ACTUALLY** treated **(EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only) | _____ visits per week |

15. Approximately what percentage of the patients who visited the primary practice in 1986:

| | Entire Practice Patient Characteristics |
|---|---|
| a. were: | |
| 14 years of age or younger | _____% |
| 15 to 64 years of age | _____% |
| 65 years of age or older | _____% |
| | **TOTAL 100 %** |
| b. were members of families whose annual income is estimated to be: | |
| under $10,000 | _____% |
| $10,000 to 29,999 | _____% |
| $30,000 or more | _____% |
| | **TOTAL 100 %** |
| c. were: | |
| covered by a private insurance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care | _____% |
| covered by a public assistance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care | _____% |
| not covered by an insurance program | _____% |
| | **TOTAL 100 %** |
| d. were members of a racial minority | _____% |

16. During the entire year of 1986 indicate the **TOTAL** number of **DIFFERENT PATIENTS** treated by the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** _____ **different patients**

17. For the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986 how long did an average patient of record and average new patient have to **WAIT:**

| | Entire Practice Waiting Time | |
|---|---|---|
| | patient of record | new patient |
| a. for the **INITIAL APPOINTMENT** of a series (excluding emergency cases) | _____ | _____ |
| | **days** | |
| b. to see a dentist **AFTER** the patient arrived for a **SCHEDULED** APPOINTMENT | _____ | _____ |
| | **minutes** | |

18. In the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE**, what was the **total amount of fees charged** for the dental care provided during 1986 **(annual billing)**? $ _____.00

19. What percentage of the 1986 **GROSS RECEIPTS** were received: (If none, enter zero.)

| | Gross Receipts |
|---|---|
| a. as direct patient payment | _____% |
| b. as payment from government programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or other public insurance) | _____% |
| c. as direct payment from private insurance carriers | _____% |
| d. from other sources of payment (Please specify) _____ | _____% |
| | **TOTAL 100 %** |

20. During 1986, were any of the expenses of the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** (dental facilities or staff) shared with other dentists?

Yes ..... 1
No ..... 2

If you shared expenses (dental facilities or staff) with any other practice, please report **YOUR PRIMARY PRACTICE** expenses only.

21. For the following selected items, what were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** for the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986? (If no expenses were incurred for specific items, please enter zero.)

| | Expenses |
|---|---|
| a. Yearly rent | $ _____.00 |
| b. Yearly mortgage (including interest) | $ _____.00 |
| c. Total salaries, wages and commissions of non-dentists employees | $ _____.00 |
| d. Commercial dental laboratory charges | $ _____.00 |
| e. Dental supplies | $ _____.00 |
| f. Advertising expenses | $ _____.00 |
| g. Bad debts | $ _____.00 |

22. What were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** of operating the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986? $ _____.00
(This figure should be greater than the sum of the figures in question 21.)

Thank you for your assistance in this important research project. Please return this questionnaire by folding and place tape as indicated. Drop it in the mail.